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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 002026

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DEPARTMENT FOR A/S FRAZER, S/E NATSIOS, AND AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU

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SUBJECT: PAGAN AMUM: ABYEI IN EXCHANGE FOR NCP/SPLM UNITY
IN 2009 ELECTION

REF: A. KHARTOUM 2000
B. KHARTOUM 2020

Classified By: CDA Roberto Powers, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶11. (C) Summary: The NCP has made a strategic decision to meet all SPLM demands and ultimately will have to accept the ABC report on Abyei if it wants a partnership with the SPLM in the 2009 election, according to SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum. Although SPLM Ministers will rejoin the Government of National Unity following a swearing-in ceremony tentatively planned for December 27, at their meeting on December 17 First Vice President Kiir presented President Bashir with a white paper indicating that there will be no political alliance in the 2009 election and the SPLM will not work toward unity in Sudan if the ABC report is not accepted. Amum believes the NCP is making compromises in response to the pressure of proposed international meetings on Sudan, such as the IGAD summit, which the NCP wants to avoid. End summary.

Crisis Resolved for Now

¶12. (C) Meeting with CDA Fernandez December 17, SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum was optimistic about the results of his party's negotiations with the NCP. "The NCP conceded to remove all strategic obstacles because the SPLM plan worked," crowed Amum. He said the NCP agreed to redeploy SAF forces and to deploy the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs) in the oil fields, to improve transparency by allowing SPLM representatives to inspect operations at all oil fields (except Abyei), to complete border demarcation, and to release all funds for the census. Amum observed that the NCP appears to have made a strategic decision to partner with the SPLM in advance of the 2009 election. Echoing the late John Garang's vision for a 'New Sudan,' Amum said the NCP "must accept that this will mean transforming and changing Sudan - a new deal." Amum claimed the NCP had also recognized "signs that former SAF military officers were planning to move against the NCP" if it did not resolve the crisis with the SPLM quickly.

¶13. (C) Although the cabinet crisis may be behind them, and both NCP and SPLM sources have indicated that there will be a swearing-in ceremony o/a December 27 for the new SPLM Ministers, Amum warned that the NCP must negotiate on Abyei if it wants a partnership with the SPLM. Amum said Vice President Kiir had presented President Bashir with a white paper outlining the negative consequences for the NCP if it

does not fully implement the Abyei Protocol and accept the Abyei Boundary Commission (ABC) report. In essence, the paper threatens that if the NCP does not implement the Abyei Protocol, the SPLM will not agree to a political alliance with the NCP in the 2009 elections, and the SPLM will not campaign for unity in Sudan leading up to the 2011 referendum. However, Amum claimed that the SPLM would campaign for unity if the ABC report is accepted, and he predicted that this would make the SPLM popular in the North during the 2009 elections.

Request for U.S. Assistance on Abyei

¶4. (C) Amum requested U.S. assistance with the resolution of the Abyei dispute, and suggested a high-level meeting to push the NCP in the right direction. "The U.S. needs to play a role - if the ABC report is not accepted, it hurts the CPA and that hurts U.S. policy of a united, stable Sudan." If the ABC report is not accepted, he predicted, this will lead to disintegration and the Abyei Dinka leaders in the SPLM could seek to start a border war. Amum claimed that if there is a border war in Abyei, the Misseriya will be with the SPLM because above all they are interested in grazing rights in Bahr al Ghazal.

¶5. (C) Amum said President Bashir had asked the SPLM to report on Secretary Rice's Ministerial in Addis Ababa and appeared concerned about reported plans for an IGAD Summit. Amum intimated that it appeared the NCP is responding to the threat of external meetings on Sudan, which it wants to avoid. "We told them there will be an IGAD meeting, and they are responding to these pressures," observed Amum. Amum said the SPLM also plans to organize a meeting of all Sudanese

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political parties in Juba sometime early in the new year. "Hassan al Turabi is the first person we will invite," but he said the SPLM will also invite members of every other political party including the NCP. CDA encouraged Amum and the SPLM to nurture relationship with other opposition parties, noting that they will be valuable allies in the future and these relationships can help lead toward the political transformation of Sudan. (Note: The political parties meeting in Juba seems to be planned for sometime after the January 9 three-year anniversary celebration of the signing of the CPA. According to both NCP and SPLM sources, CPA commemoration events are planned for Khartoum, Juba, and possibly Wau. End note.)

AEC Chair

¶6. (C) CDA Fernandez encouraged Amum to convince the SPLM to be open to the UK candidate for AEC chair, former UK Ambassador to Cairo Derek Plumley. CDA assured Amum that the U.S. would not allow a puppet to serve as AEC chair. (Note: As reported in Ref B, the SPLM is concerned that since Plumley is an Arabist, he may be partial to the NCP point of view. End note.)

¶7. (C) Comment: This was a very different Pagan Amum to the one who was warning of impending war just a month ago. Although Amum's offer of Abyei for an NCP-SPLM partnership is logical and we have heard similar suggestions from members of both parties and from observers, it still appears unlikely that the NCP will be willing to offer up Abyei, and it is also unclear that the SPLM can deliver on a promise of unity in 2011. However both parties have achieved their short term goals, just in time for the Eid and Christmas holidays. The NCP has avoided "internationalizing" discussions of the CPA and did not give up anything on Abyei, while the SPLM has gained public and private commitments from the NCP to complete actions on CPA implementation - actions that should have been achieved already. The SPLM was also successful in removing turncoat ministers and enforcing party discipline,

which was one of the flashpoints for the SPLM withdrawal of its Ministers from the GNU October 11. Progress on critical areas of agreement such as force redeployment and the census is unlikely before the end of the year, but at least with the political crisis behind them for now, the CPA partners may attempt to move forward on these areas of agreement early in the new year.

POWERS